

# Memorandum



TO: Pat Murdo, Legislative Services Division  
 FROM: Barbara Wagner, Chief Economist, Montana Dept. of Labor & Industry  
 CONTACT: [bwagner@mt.gov](mailto:bwagner@mt.gov) or (406) 444-5474  
 DATE: September 11, 2017  
 SUBJECT: Detailed Work Status for Yellowstone County

As a part of your information gathering for the study bill on unemployment in high-poverty counties (SJR 20), you asked for data on marginally attached, discouraged, and involuntary part-time workers by county in Montana. Unfortunately, such information does not exist because it would be very expensive to collect such detailed information by county. Discouraged workers comprise less than 2% of the population, necessitating a very high sampling rate of nearly 100% sampling rate to get an accurate tally. Such an extensive survey would be very expensive to complete.

Yellowstone County is the only Montana county with sufficient survey coverage to provide information on discouraged or part-time workers. The detailed labor force status of the Yellowstone County population 16 and over is provided below using monthly Current Population Survey (CPS) surveys completed from August 2014 to July 2017. Three years of data was used to increase the stability of the estimates.

<b>Table 1: Labor Force Status in Yellowstone County</b>		
	<b>Number of People</b>	<b>Percent of Population</b>
<b>Total Population 16 and over</b>	<b>122,400</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Employed</b>	<b>78,200</b>	<b>63.9%</b>
Employed Part-Time	14,600	11.9%
Employed Part-Time Desiring Full-Time	2,400	2.0%
<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>2,700</b>	<b>2.2%</b>
On Layoff - Returning to a Job	900	0.7%
Only available part-time	600	0.5%
<b>Not in Labor Force</b>		
Discouraged	190	0.2%
Discouraged and in School	30	0.0%
Discouraged and Retired	10	0.0%
Not in Labor Force Not Discouraged	41,318	33.8%
Retired	24,900	20.3%
In School	5,100	4.2%
Disabled or Ill	5,300	4.3%
Taking Care of House or Family	5,000	4.1%
Source: Current Population Data Aug. 2014 to July 2017 through DataFerret, U.S. Census Bureau and Bureau of Labor Statistics		

Table 1 illustrates the labor force status of the Yellowstone population 16 years and over. Roughly 64% of the population is employed, which is higher than the state as a whole. Labor force participation, calculated as those